UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.241/16
13 January 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE ELABORATION OF A CONVENTION TO
COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA (INCD)
Third session
New York, 17-28 January 1994
Agenda item 3

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION AS REGARDS EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION.

1. By its resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly established a Special Voluntary Fund, administered by the head of the ad hoc secretariat under the authority of the Secretary General of the United Nations, to assist developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular the least developed countries, to participate fully and effectively in the negotiating process.

2. During the organizational session of the negotiating Committee some countries indicated their contributions to the Fund, others indicated their intention to do so as soon as their internal procedures would permit. The Chairman of the Committee urged Governments in a position to do so but which have not yet done so to contribute to the Special Voluntary Fund according to their possibilities at an early date. He also urged the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to contribute generously to the Special Voluntary Fund.

3. The current status of pledges and receipts is shown in the following table:

Special Voluntary Fund for participation of developing countries
(General Assembly resolution 47/188, para 15)
Status of contributions as of 10 January 1994

	Special Voluntary Fund	
	Pledges	Contributions
	(US dollars)	
MEMBER STATES		
Canada	77,662	77,662
Denmark	199,985	199,985
France*	104,199	70,358
Germany	185,827	185,827
Japan	to be announced	
Norway	199,985	199,985
Spain	42,024	42,024
Sweden	262,280	262,280
Switzerland	66,013	66,013
United Kingdom	111,727	111,727
USA	50,000	50,000
OTHERS		
European Union*	57,000	-
TOTAL	1,356,702	1,265,861

* Approximate US dollar equivalent of local currency pledge.

4. These resources have been used in connection with the first, second and third substantive sessions of the Committee. In extending assistance to the countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, due attention has been paid to the particular situation of the countries concerned, as well as precedents established recently by negotiating processes on Climate Change and Biodiversity.

5. In the light of the above considerations the Secretariat issued travel authorizations for the first and second sessions, to one delegate from about 70 countries including most LDCs and a significant number of developing countries affected by desertification and drought as specified in paragraph 15 of General Assembly's resolution 47/188. For the third session, funds were available to cover only 45 countries.

6. In addition, financial assistance has been extended to 3 representatives of developing countries who are members of the Bureau of the Committee and its two Working Groups, in order to ensure that the delegates concerned have no difficulty in participating in the Committee's work.

7. Should appropriate arrangements be adopted for the fourth and fifth sessions (Geneva and Paris), i.e., the funding of one delegate from some 70 countries and Bureau members, the total amount of additional contributions required for this Fund would amount to an estimated US$800,000. In the light of this situation, the Committee may wish to call upon potential donors to make the necessary contributions to the Special Voluntary Fund.

8. The Committee may also wish to give further guidance to the Executive Secretary concerning the adequacy of the arrangements made in respect of the use of the Fund for participation in the substantive sessions held to-date and concerning its future use.

II. TRUST FUND FOR THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

9. The General Assembly, by its resolution 47/228, paragraph 13 decided that "the negotiating process shall be funded through existing United Nations budgetary resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to a Trust Fund established specifically for that purpose for the duration of the negotiations..." It also urged "governments, regional economic integration organizations and other interested organizations, including non governmental organizations, to contribute generously to the Trust Fund."

10. The current situation concerning pledges and contributions is shown in the following table. A number of countries which had pledged have made contributions while others have pledged without specifying the amounts of their envisaged contributions. The following countries made such pledges: Denmark, Germany, Japan, Spain and Sweden. The Secretariat has established contacts with other countries as well as Agencies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations to enlist their support. Pledges have been made by Australia and the European Union. UNDP has announced additional contributions in support of the negotiating process, including an amount of US$100,000 already put at the disposal of the INCD Secretariat by UNSO. UNEP has increased its support from the level reported to the second session.

Trust Fund for the Negotiating Process
Status of contributions as of 10 January 1994

	Trust Fund for Preparatory Activities	
	Pledges	Contributions
	(US dollars)	
MEMBER STATES		
Australia	115,996	34,915
Canada	134,982	134,982
Cyprus	1,000	1,000
Denmark	to be announced	-
Finland*	91,000	-
France	105,542	105,542
Germany	to be announced	-
Italy*	93,750	-
Japan	to be announced	-
Netherlands	555,139	555,139
Norway	187,971	187,971
Spain	to be announced	-
Sweden	to be announced	-
Switzerland*	328,699	185,310
USA	200,000	200,000
OTHERS		
European Union*	57,000	-
UNEP	400,000	300,000
TOTAL	2,187,998	1,704,859

* Approximate US dollar equivalent of local currency pledge.

11. At the time of the adoption of resolution 47/188, the General Assembly was informed that estimated costs in 1993 and 1994 for staff and conference servicing in connection with the work of the Committee would be absorbed in the United Nations Programme Budget for those years. Three professional level posts and four general service posts were provided from the regular budget for 1993, and two senior posts were loaned from the resources of the Department of Administration and Management. For 1994, the two senior level posts have been incorporated into the regular budget of INCD, and non-staff costs have been provided for at a similar level as that for 1993. The Fund was established for the purpose of supplementing the resources to be provided by the regular budget; these additional resources were required to enable the Secretariat to undertake activities designed to provide the necessary support to the negotiating process including preparatory substantive work at the national, regional and global levels. As summarized in the Aide Memoire attached to the Secretary General's note verbale, the Secretariat estimated the extrabudgetary resources needed at US$3.2 million, to enable it to carry out the activities identified.

12. As agreed with contributing countries, US, Canada, Switzerland, three staff members have been recruited for one year using the resources available in the Fund. France has made a contribution which has enabled the recruitment of an Associate Expert from a developing country for one year. A staff member of

the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has been seconded to the Secretariat for the duration of the negotiations. The FAO has also seconded an Environmental Lawyer to assist the Secretariat on a part-time basis. Further, the Secretariat has been in contact with Italy and Spain to obtain the secondment of civil servants or the financing of experts. Other staff members, both professional and general service, may be made available from the United Nations secretariat, other institutions or will be recruited as temporary staff financed from the Fund.

13. The Committee may wish to call upon potential donors to respond to the need for contributions to the Trust Fund so as to enable the Secretariat to launch the activities designed to support the negotiating process.

UNITED
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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.241/16/Add.1
27 January 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE ELABORATION OF A CONVENTION
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE
COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT
AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY
IN AFRICA (INCD)
Third session
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Agenda item 3

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION AS REGARDS EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

Note by the Executive Secretary

Addendum

This note constitutes a revision of the tables presented in document A/AC.241/16 on the status of extrabudgetary resources. The tables showing the status of contributions for both the Special Voluntary Fund for participation of developing countries and the Trust Fund for the Negotiating Process have been completed with the pledges made during the plenary meeting on Monday, 24 January 1994. The following countries have made new pledges: Denmark, France, Japan and Spain.

Trust Fund for the Negotiating Process

Status of contributions as of 24 January 1994

	Trust Fund for Preparatory Activities	
	Pledges	Contributions
	(US dollars)	
Member States		
Australia*	115 996	34 915
Canada*	134 982	134 982
Cyprus	1 000	1 000
Denmark	200 000	-
Finland*	91 000	-
France*	105 542	105 542
Germany	to be announced	-
Italy*	93 750	-
Japan*	123 000	-
Netherlands*	555 139	555 139
Norway*	187 971	187 971
Spain	25 000	-
Sweden	to be announced	-
Switzerland*	326 699	185 310
USA	200 000	200 000
Others		
European Union*	57 000	-
UNEP	400 000	300 000
Total	2 617 079	1 704 859

* Approximate US dollar equivalent of local currency pledge.

Special Voluntary Fund for participation of developing countries
(General Assembly resolution 47/188, para. 15)

Status of contributions as of 24 January 1994

	Special Voluntary Fund	
	Pledges	Contributions
	(US dollars)	
Member States		
Canada*	77 662	77 662
Denmark	199 985	199 985
France*	159 754	70 358
Germany*	185 827	185 827
Japan*	300 000	-
Norway	199 985	199 985
Spain*	42 024	42 024
Sweden*	262 280	262 280
Switzerland*	66 013	66 013
United Kingdom*	111 727	111 727
USA	50 000	50 000
Others		
European Union*	57 000	-
Total	1 712 257	1 265 861

* Approximate US dollar equivalent of local currency pledge.

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.241/17
17 January 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE ELABORATION OF AN
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Third session
New York, 17-28 January 1994
Agenda item 2

ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA

Possible Format and Elements of a Regional Implementation Annex for Africa

Note by the Secretariat

I. Initial Provisions

II. Characteristics of the African region

III. Procedural arrangements

- A. African countries involved in action programmes
- B. Responsibilities of sub-regional and regional organizations
- C. Coordination of action programmes
- D. Concertation with donor countries

IV. Guidelines for preparation of action programmes

- A. Methodology
- B. Timetable
- C. Length
- D. Role of Agenda 21
- E. Format

V. Content of action programmes

Annexes A, B, C

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Introduction

1. Since the early stages of the negotiating process, a large number of delegations held that the international regime to combat desertification should consist of a Convention supplemented by regional instruments. The rationale for this approach is that, while desertification occurs in many regions of the world, its causes and remedies differ from one region to another. Against this background, the regional instrument for Africa, like other similar instruments, would provide a vehicle to adapt measures undertaken pursuant to the Convention to the specific conditions of the region. There is general agreement that, in order to reflect the priority to be given to Africa, the Committee should adopt the instrument for African along with the Convention in June 1994.

2. Reflecting the views of many delegations, the negotiating text of the Convention in document A/AC.241/15 assumes that regional instruments would take the form of regional implementation annexes forming an integral part of the Convention. This note is based on the same assumption. Its purpose is to facilitate initial discussions on a regional instrument for Africa in Working Group II during the January 1994 session of the INCD. Frequent references are made to Articles in the negotiating text to illustrate the close relationship between the Annex and the Convention. Obviously, these Articles will change in the course of the negotiation, which might necessitate corresponding changes in the structure of the Annex.

3. The sections below discuss some types of provisions which might be included in the Annex following a logical structure. The Committee may wish to consider other avenues of approach as well, particularly after hearing the views of the African countries themselves.

I. Initial provisions

4. The initial provisions of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (hereafter referred to as the "Annex") could clearly identify its basis under the Convention, as currently set out in Article 17 of the negotiating text, as well as in Article 19, paragraph 2 and Article 20, paragraph 3. In doing so, these provisions could lay out the basic functions of the Annex as ensuring the implementation of the Convention, particularly Articles 9 to 23, in the African context by: providing a framework for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of national, sub-regional and regional action programmes.

II. Characteristics of African region

5. The Annex could, following Article 17, briefly describe relevant distinguishing characteristics of the African region, including socio-economic, geographic and climatic factors applicable to affected countries as well as their level of development. The following are some possible examples of such characteristics:

(a) the large area of the Continent, significant number of countries, and substantial populations affected by desertification and drought;

(b) the severity of desertification throughout the Continent, the frequent recurrence of severe drought in many countries, and their adverse impact on local populations;

(c) the widespread poverty prevalent in most affected countries as reflected in per capita income statistics and classification as least developed;

(d) the low level of scientific, technological, educational and institutional capacity, leading to substantial capacity building requirements; and

(e) the need of many affected countries for significant amounts of concessional external assistance to develop at reasonable rates while avoiding balance of payments imbalances.

III. Procedural arrangements

A. African countries involved in action programmes

6. The Annex could list the affected country Parties preparing national action programmes, as well as the groups of African countries participating in sub-regional and regional action programmes.

7. One possibility would be for the countries concerned to cooperate along the lines of four natural sub-regional groups having much in common with respect to desertification and drought issues, that is Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa and Southern Africa. A number of issues could arise in implementing such a configuration:

(a) the possible association of Central African countries with one or another of the four groups;

(b) the possible inclusion of a few countries in more than one group, for example Mauritania in both Northern and Western Africa; and

(c) the participation of countries in a sub-region which, although not themselves affected by desertification, can contribute to combatting desertification and the effects of drought, for example in the management of river basins.

B. Responsibilities of sub-regional and regional organizations

8. Country Parties preparing joint sub-regional programmes may wish to determine the nature and extent of the responsibilities, if any, of intergovernmental sub-regional organizations, such as The Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), The Interstate Committee on Combatting Drought in the Sahel (CILSS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in the preparation and implementation of the programmes. Possibilities range from providing secretariat facilities to taking charge of preparation and overseeing implementation.

9. Several issues arise in this context. First, the countries concerned with the elaboration of a joint sub-regional action programme may not all be a member of the relevant sub-regional organization. The CILSS membership, for example, does not comprise all concerned countries in West Africa. Second, in some cases, there may be more than one organization in a sub-region which could play a useful role in sub-regional programmes. It might be desirable, for example, to identify the specific roles of: ECOWAS, CILSS, the River and Lake Basin institutions and other specialized organizations in a West African programme; the Great Lakes Authority and the Economic Community of Central African States in a Central African programme; the Preferential Trade Agreement and the Southern African Development Community in a South African programme.

10. The Annex could also, in a similar fashion, lay out the roles of African regional organizations, such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the African Economic Community in the regional action programme.

C. Coordination of action programmes

11. Coordination in the elaboration and implementation of action programmes is provided for in Article 16 of the negotiating text. Sound coordination arrangements are among the keys to ensuring effective implementation of the Convention. Their purpose would be to bring together affected countries, countries in a position to provide assistance, the United Nations and relevant specialized agencies, the international financial organizations, other intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in the framework of a single agreed strategy outlined in the Annex and further developed in national, sub-regional and regional action programmes for Africa

12. Coordination is necessary to ensure the complementarity of actions carried out by each of these actors, the absence of duplication of effort and a more effective use of the resources available, with a view to effectively achieving the objectives of the African action programmes. This section of the Annex would address the actual mechanisms to carry out required coordination leading to agreement on specific measures to be taken by each government or organization. It could also possibly indicate which countries in a position to provide assistance and which organizations would participate in specific action programmes. Alternatively, the action programmes themselves could provide for this.

13. Over the years, a wide variety of coordination mechanisms have been used or discussed, including:

(a) World Bank led Consortia and Consultative Groups, neither of which has been common in Africa;

(b) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) roundtables, which have existed for many African countries;

(c) special arrangements at the sub-regional level between groups of countries in a position to provide assistance and African countries, such as the collaboration between CILSS and the Club du Sahel;

(d) participation of countries in a position to provide assistance as observers at meetings of sub-regional groups such as IGADD and CILSS;

(e) coordination at the national level under the auspices of UNDP resident representatives;

(f) designation of a lead donor country or international agency to coordinate assistance programmes with recipient governments on behalf of the donor community; and

14. There is general dissatisfaction among both African countries and the international community with the effectiveness of coordination arrangements tried to date in Africa. There is also general concern that coordination arrangements are overly time consuming for all participants in them. It will be a major challenge of the Annex to devise streamlined and effective arrangements involving appropriate modifications and improvements to existing mechanisms so as to lead to realistic and specific measures in the action programmes.

D. Concertation with donor countries

15. The results of the INCD preparatory process and the preparation and implementation of programmes at the national and regional levels in accordance with the provisions of the Convention should be periodically reviewed by affected countries, institutions, donor countries, relevant international organizations and the INCD. In order to launch this process, a first concertation meeting could be organized by the INCD in the Spring, in Geneva, to review the content of preparatory activities carried thus far and discuss the modalities of further concertation.

IV. Guidelines for preparation of action programmes

A. Methodology

16. The Committee will need to consider whether the Annex should include guidance for the steps to be followed in preparing national and sub-regional action programmes. Given the relative simplicity of a possible regional action programme, such guidance would likely be unnecessary in that case.

17. The Secretariat has assisted four African countries in carrying out pilot studies leading to national action programmes. In doing so, the countries agreed on and employed a common methodology, which appears in Annex A. It could provide a starting point for discussion if the Committee wishes to pursue the matter. The countries themselves could provide their views on how the methodology could be modified for future use.

18. The Secretariat also suggested a methodology for preparation of sub-regional action programmes in similarly assisting four sub-regional organizations. The organizations involved did not, however, implement it uniformly. For the Committee's information, it is reproduced in Annex B.

B. Timetable

19. The Annex might include timetables for the elaboration of national, sub-regional and regional action programmes, leaving timetables for implementation to be agreed in the programmes themselves in accordance with Article 10 (2). If the Committee decides to include such deadlines for preparation, a number of considerations would come into play. There would, for example, be arguments for rapid preparation of the programmes to reflect the urgency of drought and desertification issues to be balanced against the need to provide ample time for consultation with local populations and other interested groups at the national level and to ensure that sub-regional and regional programmes complemented national programmes.

20. Any timetables decided on would have to take account of the possibility that the Committee, in providing for provisional implementation of the Convention and the Annex, could agree to the elaboration and negotiation of action programmes in the interim period prior to the entry into force of the Convention.

C. Length

21. The Annex could provide that each type of action programme would contain a summary of a given number of pages, which would highlight the key actions in it. This summary would be the basis for reporting on, reviewing and evaluating the programmes in the Conference of Parties.

D. Role of Agenda 21

22. During previous discussions in the Committee, many delegations emphasized the guiding role which Agenda 21 should play in the elaboration of action programmes. The Annex could contain a brief provision underlining this role.

E. Format

23. As part of its guidelines for the elaboration and implementation of action programmes, the Annex could contain simple standard formats. This would facilitate comparison, review and assessment, while leaving sufficient room for national and sub-regional variation. Such formats, if agreed, would have to accord with Articles 10 to 15 of the negotiating text while taking account of the African context.

24. Following this line of reasoning, the Committee might begin discussion with the following tentive components for nional action programmes in Africa:

(a) identification of the relevant physical and sociological factors contributing to desertification, as called for in Article 10;

(b) overall strategy for carrying out the obligations in Article 10, particularly the components of and procedures for developing local programmes, and relationship of programme to single strategic planning framework for sustainable development;

(c) specific measures in key sectors of implementation listed in Articles 11 and 14, including goals, activities and institutional implications;

(d) measures to create an enabling environment at national level, in accordance with Article 10 (1) (c) and related provisions of the negotiating text, including institutional frameworks, legislation, economic instruments and demographic policies;

(e) assessment, under Article 10, of financial, technical and human resources available and required;

(f) support, under Article 15 and related provisions, from countries in a position to provide assistance in the areas for financial resources, technology cooperation and capacity building; and

(g) timetable for implementation, mechanisms for systematic observation and criteria/benchmarks to measure progress, as laid out in Article 10 (2).

25. Similar formats could be devised for the sub-regional and the Africa-wide programme following Articles 12 and 13, instead of Articles 10 and 11, with regard to points (b), (c) and (d).

V. Content of action programmes

26. The Annex could contain obligations about the content of action programmes, possibly building on simple formats such as those described above. To assist in this decision, as well as in the process of elaborating action programmes, the Secretariat is currently preparing analytical summaries of the case studies as well as a cross-sectoral synthesis illustrating possible elements of action programmes in the various sectors of activities. A possible structure for the action programmes is presented in Annex "C" based on the work carried out so far.

27. Following are some preliminary comments on this question to initiate discussion:

(a) The Annex could identify the areas that should be covered in the national action programmes based on the relevant socio-economic, geographic and climatic factors and, to the extent possible, the actual measures that are required in each area. Articles 11 and 14 of the negotiating text provide an indicative list of possible areas to be included.

(b) The Annex could logically include separate sections on the content of each of the sub-regional action programmes agreed. These sections would expand on Article 12 (a) to (d) including, for example, the role of international organizations for the development of transboundary river and lake basins; joint activities relating to energy, rangeland management, transnational reforestation programmes.

(c) Since the focus of the Convention is on action at the local and national level, the regional action programme would presumably be concise and seek to supplement and reinforce activities at the national level. It would likely focus on the role of Africa-wide institutions and organizations in facilitating the implementation in Africa of relevant Sections and Articles of the Convention. Africa-wide organizations might also play a role in reviewing African national and sub-regional action programmes and reporting on them to the Conference of the Parties.

(d) Consistent with Article 17 (c) and Articles 15, 22 and 23, the Annex could provide indications on the degree and nature of assistance to be contributed by country Parties in a position to provide assistance, as well as on the contribution expected from intergovernmental organizations in the elaboration and implementation of action programmes at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. This would include the issue of financial resources as well as cooperation with respect to research activities, technology and capacity building. Arrangements for the provision of such assistance would be agreed through the coordination process discussed above and closely related to the kinds of activities included in individual action programmes.

ANNEX A

METHODOLOGY FOR INCD NATIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Basic strategy of action programmes

2. Role of preparatory activities in developing model action programmes

II. METHODOLOGY FOR NATIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Collection of basic information at local level

Phase 2: Consultation and strategy identification

Phase 3: Preliminary action programme /national roundtable

Phase 4: Preparation of final action programme and report to INCD

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Basic strategy of action programmes

The General Assembly in Resolution 47/188 entrusted the INCD with the task of elaborating by June 1994 a convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa (hereafter The Convention). The centrepiece of The Convention should be a set of procedures for elaborating commitments, both by countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification and by the international community, in the form of national, regional and/or sub-regional action programmes. The basic strategy for these action programmes would flow from the objectives of The Convention. Key elements of the strategy might include:

(a) Actions to ensure popular participation in decision making at the local level, including democratic processes, free access by local people to information, emphasis on environmental education and awareness, and a strong role for major groups, particularly farmers, pastoralists, women and Non-Governmental Organizations;

(b) Measures to reduce poverty, since it is both a cause and a consequence of land degradation, and population pressure;

(c) Expansion of extension services and other local programmes to prevent anthropogenically caused degradation as well as rehabilitate, sustainably manage and improve, rainfed croplands, irrigated croplands, pastures and forests in dryland areas;

(d) Elaboration of modern techniques for research, information collection, information sharing and capacity building with a new focus on giving local people the tools they perceive they need to utilize the biological and other resources of the ecosystems they live in both sustainably and productively;

(e) Diffusion of appropriate management technologies, customized to local circumstances and land use systems, with full attention to economic incentives and disincentives, commercial possibilities and cultural factors;

(f) Innovation of alternative livelihood systems and migration strategies to relieve population pressure on the carrying capacity of degraded dryland ecosystems;

(g) Development of alternative energy systems for dryland areas through agroforestry, improved stoves and the utilization of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power;

(h) Reorientation of national policies and programmes to provide an "enabling environment" for local action, particularly by removing bottlenecks to sustainable development, such as inappropriate demographic policy or land tenure systems, and by giving priority in national budgets to effective decentralization, extension services and other interactions with local people;

(i) Restructuring of sub-regional institutions and cooperation to fully support sustainable development at the community level in countries of the region, taking full account of macro-economic factors such as debt, trade patterns and of other relevant aspects of the international environment.

2. Role of preparatory activities in developing model action programmes

The organizational session of the INCD in January 1993 concurred in the Secretariat organizing a series of case studies to develop flexible models of: (a) the commitments which individual countries affected could take to combat desertification and mitigate drought through local, national and sub-regional policies and programmes, and (b) the commitments of the international community in support of these policies and programmes.

These models would elaborate the structure of, and steps to, prepare national and sub-regional action programmes to carry out the basic strategy outlined above. The action programmes could have a variety of sectoral components. To avoid duplication in planning processes at the national level, national action programmes could also serve as the management-of-fragile-ecosystems portions of the national sustainable development plans envisaged in Agenda 21. They would also build as much as possible on earlier planning and programming documents, bearing in mind both the underlying new strategy in Agenda 21 and its detailed recommendations.

The action programmes would be long-term, covering a period of ten to fifteen years and specifying necessary financial commitments for the duration of the programme. The case studies would evolve general guidelines for the preparation and structure of action programmes but would not provide the type of model which would be replicable in detail in all situations.

Following the guidance of the INCD, the Secretariat initiated a first stage of preparatory activities in case studies for four African countries and four corresponding sub-regions in Africa. Their results are due by December 1993, at a time when they will provide useful elements for the ongoing INCD negotiation process. The approach is being extended to other regions of the developing world. Second stage preparatory activities are to assist in the preparation of regional instruments outside Africa and to facilitate at the national level the implementation of the regional instrument for Africa.

On the basis of comments from the International Panel of Experts on Desertification, and members of the INCD, the Secretariat prepared methodologies for the national studies, as well as related sub-regional studies, with the aim of attaining a general format for the action programmes. The methodologies were then further revised after the Secretariat received suggestions from countries and organizations involved in carrying out preparatory activities and from United Nations agencies concerned with drought and desertification issues.

The section below contain the current text of the revised methodology for preparatory activities at the national level. Their timing, in different phases, will be different in specific countries.

II. METHODOLOGY FOR NATIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Collection of basic information at local level

- Select small number of local units (e.g. two-three counties, one commune) from different parts of the country which have different ethnic/cultural traditions, on which there is a good information base and which together provide examples of all of country's drought/desertification problems. Where possible, these local units should incorporate unique ecosystems. Ideally, they should also encompass both desertified lands subject to rehabilitation and lands vulnerable to desertification, as well as areas in different economic circumstances.

- Assemble multi-disciplinary assessment teams for each local unit with participation from national and local government and, if necessary, from private voluntary organizations, bilateral/multilateral donors or UN agencies. Team members should generally be resident in country.

- Gather all readily available sources of relevant information on the local unit, including the items below and drawing on: (a) surveys, inventories and studies from all easily accessible sources, (b) information which the INCD Secretariat is assembling from UN and other data bases, and (c) field observations.

  -- Information will cover relevant bio-physical and socio-economic data, ecological features and trends as well as institutional mechanisms and structures.

- Identify information gaps for use at later stages of preparatory activities.

- Summarize, while presenting results, elements falling under portions of Agenda 21 relevant in local context, including but not limited to Chapter 12 on Combatting Desertification and Drought.

- Prepare summary of information gathered and information gaps for use at meetings in later phases of the process at the national level.

Phase 2: Consultation and strategy identification

- Hold consultative appropriate forums with assessment teams and local populations/leaders in each local unit to assess the items below. These consultations could overlap the information gathering efforts in Phase 1.

-- Impact of national and local legislation, regulations, policies and incentives which affect land utilization/degradation and water utilization (e.g. land tenure, property rights of women, subsidies).

-- Economic and social constraints on land and water resource management from standpoint of local population, particularly economic disincentives to use of sustainable technologies.

-- Assessment of priority needs and key bottlenecks in the fight against desertification.

-- Availability and quality of social services to enhance education, health, nutrition and other aspects of the quality of life in the local community.

-- Successes and failures of programmes of national governments, local governments, bilateral/multilateral donors and private voluntary organizations.

-- Efficiency of local authorities, decentralized administration, participatory mechanism, information dissemination and education/awareness programmes.

o Assist local authorities, groups and population to identify anti-desertification strategies in the light of the above. In so doing they would outline local version of Agenda 21, and pick most important items for relevant areas rather than be comprehensive. Aside from Chapter 12 on combatting drought and desertification, aspects of particular importance might include priority items from Agenda 21 sections and chapters dealing with: (a) combatting poverty, (b) demographic dynamics, (c) land resource planning, (d) forests, (e) sustainable agriculture, (f) fresh water, (g) role of major groups, (h) technology, (i) education and (j) capacity building. For each high priority activity in Agenda 21, there should be specifics on exactly how it would be carried out in the locality involved and what assistance/changes in national policies would be required to do so.

o Prepare report on results of local consultations and resulting identification of area based strategies for consideration at meetings in later phases of the national process.

Phase 3: Preliminary action programme/national roundtable

o Synthesize and evaluate all readily available and relevant information on the country, proceeding in parallel with phase 1, and identify information gaps.

o Prepare or revise sections of national sustainable development plan and/or environmental action plan dealing with programmes to combat drought and desertification. This action programme should build on existing plans and programmes but incorporate new pragmatic, locally oriented approach emerging from Agenda 21 as well as from the local consultations. It should be as specific as possible at this stage in spelling out human and financial resources needed for implementation.

- o Convene a national roundtable bringing together officials from all relevant parts of national government, including local authorities, assessment teams, donor agencies and relevant NGOs.

- o Prepare a roundtable agenda emphasizing following:

  - -- Review of information base and gaps.

  - -- Review of results of local consultations and strategy identification.

  - - Consideration of the enabling framework to combat drought and desertification, including, inter alia, the international economic conditions, (debt burden, terms of trade) demography, land tenure.

  - -- Review of current action plans for combatting drought and desertification and country's national report for UNCED.

  - -- Additions to or changes in current plans needed to support local versions of Agenda 21 with particular attention to (a) conservation of land resources, water resources and biodiversity at ecosystem level, (b) participatory mechanisms, (c) information needs of local areas, (d) introduction of appropriate management technologies, (e) economic incentives and disincentives to use of such technologies, (f) encouragement of sustainable indigenous technologies, (g) capacity building and extension services, (g) generation of alternative livelihood opportunities, (h) provisions of needed educational, health and other social services, (i) modification of legislation, policies and regulations constraining local action, (j) institutional changes in national/local government and coordination mechanisms and (k) changes in national accounts and systems of environment/development indicators.

  - -- Concrete steps and realistic timetables for extending new integrated "bottom up" approach to other localities throughout country.

  - -- To the extent possible, commitments for development, staffing and financing by multilateral donors, bilateral donors and NGOs of new projects needed to implement local and national level action programmes.

Phase 4: Preparation of final action programme and report to INCD

- o Revise and supplement national action programmes to combat drought and desertification taking account of discussions in Phase 3.

- o Prepare by the agreed date a final report to INCD according to the format contained in Annex III of the Memorandum of Understanding which:

  - -- Transmits the action programme containing the description of the enabling environment/ policy framework at the national level as well as the results of local level consultations and assessment.

  - -- Makes, as appropriate, suggestions regarding the process of preparing such national action programmes.

  - -- Gives preliminary indications regarding commitments which different parties could make in the convention implementation framework.

ANNEX B

METHODOLOGY FOR INCD REGIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Basic strategy of action programmes

2. Role of regional studies in developing model action programmes

II. METHODOLOGY FOR REGIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Collection of information on regional projects to combat drought and desertification

Phase 2: Planning of regional and/or sub-regional forums

Phase 3: Regional and/or Sub-regional Meetings

Phase 4: Report to INCD

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Basic strategy of action programmes

The General Assembly in Resolution 47/188 entrusted the INCD with the task of elaborating by June 1994 a convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa (hereafter The Convention). The centrepiece of The Convention should be a set of procedures for elaborating commitments, both by countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification and by the international community, in the form of national, regional and/or sub-regional action programmes. The basic strategy for these action programmes would flow from the objectives of The Convention. Key elements of the strategy might include:

(a) Strengthening cooperation at the regional level by encouraging policy consistency among neighbour states, particularly by removing bottlenecks to sustainable development, such as inappropriate demographic policy, land tenure systems, inappropriate range land management and by encouraging transboundary cooperation between local authorities and populations in border areas;

(b) Restructuring of sub-regional institutions and cooperation to fully support sustainable development at the community level in countries of the region, taking full account of debt, trade patterns and other relevant aspects of the international environment;

(c) Actions to ensure popular participation in decision making at the local level, including democratic processes, free access by local people to information, emphasis on environmental education and awareness, and a strong role for major groups, particularly farmers, pastoralists, women and Non-Governmental Organizations;

(d) Measures to reduce poverty, since it is both a cause and a consequence of land degradation, and population pressure;

(e) Effective decentralisation and expansion of extension services and other local programmes to prevent anthropogenically caused degradation as well as rehabilitate, sustainably manage and improve, rainfed croplands, irrigated croplands, pastures and forests in dryland areas;

(f) Regional networks for modern research techniques ,information collection, information sharing and capacity building with a new focus on giving local people the tools they perceive they need to utilize the biological and other resources of the ecosystems they live in both sustainably and productively;

(g) Regional diffusion of appropriate management technologies, customized to local circumstances and land use systems, with full attention to economic incentives and disincentives, commercial possibilities and cultural factors;

(h) Innovation of alternative livelihood systems and transnational migration strategies to relieve population pressure on the carrying capacity of degraded dryland ecosystems;

(i) Development of alternative energy systems for dryland areas through agroforestry, improved stoves and the utilization of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power and sharing of experience at the regional level.

2. Role of preparatory activities in developing model action programmes

The organizational session of the INCD in January 1993 concurred in the Secretariat organizing a series of case studies to develop flexible models of: (a) the commitments which individual countries affected could take to combat desertification and mitigate drought through local, national and sub-regional policies and programmes, and (b) the commitments of the international community in support of these policies and programmes.

These models would elaborate the structure of, and steps to, prepare national and sub-regional action programmes to carry out the basic strategy outlined above. The action programmes could have a variety of sectoral components. To avoid duplication in planning processes at the national level, national action programmes could also serve as the management-of-fragile-ecosystems portions of the national sustainable development plans envisaged in Agenda 21. They would also build as much as possible on earlier planning and programming documents, bearing in mind both the underlying new strategy in Agenda 21 and its detailed recommendations.

The action programmes would be long-term, covering a period of ten to fifteen years and specifying necessary financial commitments for the duration of the programme. The preparatory activities would evolve general guidelines for initiating and structuring action programmes but would not provide the type of model which would be replicable in detail in all situations.

Following the guidance of the INCD, the Secretariat initiated preparatory activities for four African countries and four corresponding sub-regions in Africa. Their results are due by December 1993, at a time when they will provide useful elements for the ongoing INCD negotiating process. Second stage preparatory activities are to assist in the preparation of regional instruments outside of Africa.

On the basis of comments from the International Panel of Experts on Desertification, the Secretariat prepared methodologies for the national studies, as well as related sub-regional studies, with the aim of attaining a general format for the action programmes. The methodologies were then further revised after the Secretariat received suggestions from countries and organizations involved in carrying out case studies and from United Nations agencies concerned with drought and desertification issues.

The regional preparatory activities will serve a multiple purpose:

- For the INCD process they will provide elements and features of typical actions that should become the subject of the negotiating parties' commitments within the legal framework of the Regional Instrument for that region will be an integral part of the Convention.

- For the countries of the sub-region, (i) - in providing a basis for identifying future investment programmes for sustainable development; (ii) - in providing the ground for greater policy coherence and operational coordination.

- For the sub regional institutions, the preparatory activities will clarify roles and functions in the implementation of the commitments made under the Convention.

The sections below contain the current text of the revised methodology for preparatory activities at the regional level.

III. METHODOLOGY FOR REGIONAL PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Collection of information on regional projects to combat drought and desertification

o Provide basic information on area of focus, interacting neighbouring regions, risks of desertification and potential for sustainable development. Crucial factors at the macro level of the region affecting the combat against desertification will be identified.

o List substantive programme/action areas such as, for instance,
- Management of transboundary land/grazing grounds.
- Management of shared rivers, lake and aquifers.
- Technologies.
- Early warning systems.
- Research and development.
- Information and monitoring networks.
- Capacity building.

Under each areas investigated at the regional level the study will provide:

o Selective reviews of regional projects already identified and formulated (including those approved by the 1977 United Nations Conference on Desertification and other projects under the aegis of intergovernmental organizations).

-- Present briefly priority projects (including those from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Regional Economic Commissions and other records.) Presentation,

sorted by sub regions, would include : (i)- summary project description; (ii)- assessment of updated status including elements warranting renewed interest (global impact, multiple benefits etc...); (iii)- whenever appropriate, recommendations on actions to be taken by the various partners (resources needed from where, capacity required, mechanisms etc).

- o In the light of the above and keeping in mind the need to propose concrete references for action in the forthcoming regional instrument, the report on preparatory activities will include the tentative features of a regional action programme which will be discussed at the Regional Forum.

Phase 2: Planning of a Regional Forum

- o Hold consultations during the process among regional and/or sub-regional organizations carrying out in country research work.

- o Agree on the timing, organization, agenda and attendance of a regional meeting. Attendees would include representatives of member governments, appropriate neighbouring countries, regional and/or sub-regional organizations, other appropriate sub-regional, regional and international organizations, donor countries and the INCD Secretariat.

Phase 3: Regional Forum

- o Review and evaluation by countries in the sub-region of the relevant action programme prepared in Phase 1. Consider priority actions for future funding in the context of commitments in the convention on combatting drought and desertification.

- o Assessment and recommendations regarding regional and sub-regional issues relevant to the convention, including but not necessarily limited to those below, with participation by countries in the sub-region, donors and regional/international agencies.

  - -- Implementation of promising projects in areas of alterative energy sources, water resources assessment and management; alternative livelihood systems in areas prone to desertification and drought.

  - -- Establishment or strengthening of information sharing networks for dissemination of appropriate technologies, particularly regarding land resource management, conservation of water resources and alternative energy systems.

  - - Establishment or strengthening regional centres of excellence for capacity building and research to supplement capacity building at local and national levels.

  - -- Use of innovative computer and video technologies for the training and operations of the multidisciplinary teams needed to develop integrated and targeted local approaches to combating drought and desertification and new arrangements to staff such teams.

  - -- Sharing of experience and exchange of information on the empowerment of local authorities, participatory mechanisms and education/awareness efforts.

-- Improved coordination and avoidance of duplication in donor/NGO programmes at both national and regional levels, IBRD consortia, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) roundtables, in-country task forces and other mechanisms.

Phase 4: Report to INCD

o Prepare a regional action programme to combat drought and desertification, which draws on and improves existing plans in the light of the discussions in Phases 2-3.

o Prepare a final report to the INCD which:

-- Transmits the regional action programme.

-- Summarizes the results of the Regional Forum.

-- Suggests modifications in the process of preparing such regional programmes.

-- Draws preliminary conclusions regarding regional and sub-regional commitments which different parties could make in a convention framework.

ANNEX C

POSSIBLE FORMAT OF AN AFRICAN REGIONAL INSTRUMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

II. STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

a. General considerations

1. Lessons from the case studies
2. Methodological focus on participatory development
3. Procedures for the implementation of national action programmes
4. Assistance required to prepare national action programmes

B. Summary of the components of a national action programme

1. General dispositions
2. Status of national resources and of the fight against desertification
3. Concepts and approaches
4. Implementation strategies
5. Content of action programmes
6. Resources required and available

III. CONTENT OF ACTION PROGRAMMES

A. Local development programmes

1. Components of local development programmes
2. Procedures for developing local development programmes

B. Sectors of implementation

1. Arable land management and food security
2. Pasture and range management
3. Management of vegetation cover and biodiversity conservation
4. Wildlife management
5. Water management
6. Energy
7. Drought preparedness and mitigation
8. Hydrology and meteorology
9. Information collection, analysis and exchange
10. Technology
11. Information, awareness raising and ecological education
12. Research and development

C. Enabling environment of the national level

1. Institutional framework
2. Legislation
3. Demographic policies
4. Economic instruments

D. Support from countries in position to provide assistance

1. Financial resources
2. Technology cooperation
3. Capacity building

IV. SUB-REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES

A. General remarks

B. Action taken by groups of affected countries needing assistance including scientific and technical cooperation; management of ecosystems and resources which straddle national boundaries; joint programmes (eg. pests, energy, migration, hydrology and meteorology); review of trade practices; sub-regional institutions.
i. Northern Africa
ii. West Africa
iii. East Africa
iv. Southern Africa

C. Support from countries in position to provide assistance

V. AFRICA-WIDE ACTION PROGRAMME

A. Priority areas for regional action

B. Support from countries in position to provide assistance

C. Implications for regional institutions and coordination mechanisms

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION